

Recreation Fee Program (formerly the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program)

Appropriations Language

The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA) was passed on December 8, 2004, as part of the Omnibus Appropriations bill for FY 2005. The Recreation Fee Program, created by the FLREA, replaces the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program. Most of the current 113 Fish and Wildlife Service sites currently in the Recreation Fee Demonstration Program will transition into the new program and will continue to collect entrance fees and other receipts. All receipts will be deposited into a recreation fee account of which at least 80 percent will return to the collecting site.

The new recreation fee program will demonstrate the feasibility of user generated cost recovery for the operation and maintenance of recreation areas, visitor services improvements, and habitat enhancement projects on federal lands. Fees will be used primarily at the site to improve visitor access, enhance public safety and security, address backlogged maintenance needs, enhance resource protection, and cover the costs of collection. The FLREA authorizes this program through 2014.

Authorizing Statutes

Recreation Fee Demonstration Program: *The FY 1996 Omnibus Appropriations Act* (P.L. 104-134, section 315, 110 Stat. 1321-200), as amended by *The FY 1997 Omnibus Appropriations Act* (P.L. 104-208, section 319, 110 Stat. 3009), *The FY 1997 Supplemental Appropriations* (P.L. 105-18, section 5001), *The FY 1998 Interior Appropriations Act* (P.L. 105-83, section 320 and 321), *The FY 1999 Interior Appropriations Act* (105-277, section 316 and 327), *The FY 2000 Omnibus Appropriations Act* (P.L. 106-113, section 315), *The FY 2001 Department of Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Act* (P.L. 106-291), *The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2002* (P.L. 107-63, section 312) and *The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2004* (P.L. 108-108, section 332). **New Recreation Fee Program:** *The FY 2005 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act* (P.L. 108-447, Division J, Title VIII, *The Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act*). All of these Acts provide that participating stations may deposit fees to a separate account in order to increase the quality of the visitor experience and enhance the protection of resources - for repair and maintenance, interpretation, signage, habitat or facility enhancement, resource preservation, costs of fee collection, and law enforcement related to public use.

Recreation Fee Program (Demonstration Program FY 2004)		2004 Actual	2005 Enacted	Uncont & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	2006 Budget Request	Change from 2005 (+/-)
Entrance and User Fees	\$(000)	3,854	4,200	-	-	4,200	-
CAM (see General Business Operations)	\$(000)	[432]	[374]	-	-	[384]	[10]
	FTE	36	33	-	-3	33	-3
Total, Recreation Fee Program	\$(000)	3,854	4,200	-	-	4,200	-
	FTE	36	33	-	-3	33	-3

Program Overview

The FY 2005 Consolidated Omnibus Appropriations Act (P.L. 108-447) authorized the Recreation Fee Program through 2014. This program allows the collection of entrance and expanded amenity fees, at least 80 percent of which go back to the specific site of collection to offset program costs and enhance visitor facilities and programs. The Service was one of four agencies in the previous Recreation Fee Demonstration program (authorized by the FY 1996 Omnibus Appropriations Act, as amended). Current sites include 112 refuges, which collect about \$3.8 million each year. In past years, some 65 refuges collected entrance and recreation user fees in the Refuge Recreation Fee program, authorized by the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986, which returned 30 percent of the collections to the refuges and deposited the remaining 70 percent into the Migratory Bird Conservation Account for land acquisition. The Refuge Recreation Fee program once collected as much as \$2.2 million each year, yet participation and collections dwindled as more sites joined the Recreation Fee Demonstration program. The new Recreation Fee program repeals the Service's collection authority under EWRA.

2004 Program Performance Accomplishments

In FY 2004, 112 approved sites (111 National Wildlife Refuges and one National Fish Hatchery) collected \$3,854,000 and obligated \$3,434,000 of their fee money on collection costs, visitor services improvements, and deferred maintenance. The following examples of projects accomplished through use of recreation fees show the positive impact for visitors:

- Crab Orchard NWR, IL - A variety of visitor services and maintenance activities and amenities, including stipends for the volunteer hosts that staff refuge marinas; buoys that mark underwater hazards on the lake; maintenance of roads in public use areas; repair and replacement of signage; maintenance of fishing and boat docks; and, purchase of environmental education packets for on-refuge and in-school programs.
- J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR, FL - Two seasonal interpreters, one who works at the Wildlife Drive and Visitor Education Center, interacting with visitors and conducting interpretive and educational programs for the general public and organized school groups, and, a second interpreter who delivers manatee interpretation programs on the refuge and in cooperation with nearby Lee County Manatee Park.
- A.R.M. Loxahatchee NWR, FL - A variety of visitor services and maintenance activities and amenities, including producing or maintaining refuge maps and brochures, interpretive signs, an aluminum 54-foot walking bridge, information kiosks, and benches. This year, the refuge used fee monies to improve interpretive signs and information kiosks on the canoe trail, marsh trail and at the new 20-mile Bend entrance and boat ramp.
- Bosque del Apache NWR, NM - helps fund its successful volunteer program. The refuge and visitors benefit from the work of some 100 volunteers who contribute approximately 36,000 hours. These volunteers do a variety of tasks including staffing the Nature Store and fee booth, performing roving maintenance, repairing public use areas such as decking and trails, operating heavy equipment for habitat restoration work, and landscaping. Volunteers also give wildlife-oriented educational programs and tours to school groups (some 4,000 students annually) and to the public. Recreation fee dollars pay for volunteer equipment and stipends.

2005 Planned Program Performance

The new Recreation Fee program is authorized for ten years (through 2014). The authority repeals the collection authority under Emergency Wetlands Resource Act (EWRA) of 1986 and removes the National Fish Hatchery. The multi-agency Recreation Fee program also includes the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, USDA Forest Service, and newcomer Bureau of Reclamation. In 2005 the refuge system will:

- Update guidance for refuge participation in the program based on the new legislative authorization.
- Work with refuges currently collecting fees under the EWRA to update compliance with the new program.

The following table details the current fee program at 112 National Wildlife Refuges.

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Anahauc NWR	TX	New entrance fee, modified hunt fee	Spring 1997
Aransas NWR	TX	New entrance fee, provide refuge specific annual pass, modified hunt fee	Winter 1996-1997
Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee NWR	FL	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Back Bay NWR	VA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Balcones Canyonlands NWR	TX	New hunter user fee	Spring 1997
Bald Knob NWR	AR	New quota deer hunt fee	Spring 1998
Bayou Cocodrie NWR	LA	New deer hunt fee	Spring 1997
Big Branch Marsh NWR	LA	Duck hunt	Spring 2001
Big Oaks NWR	IN	Entrance fee	Fall 2000
Black Bayou NWR	LA	New boat launch fee	Spring 1997
Blackwater NWR	MD	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, big game hunt application fee	Winter 96-97, (hunt fee Spring 1998)
Bombay Hook NWR	DE	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, modify deer hunt by increasing fee	Winter 1996-1997
Bond Swamp NWR	GA	New white-tailed deer and feral hog hunts	Spring 1999
Bosque del Apache NWR	NM	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, new fee schedule, guided refuge tours	Fall 1996
Brazoria NWR	TX	New user fee for fishing area	Spring 1997

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Buenos Aires NWR	AZ	New entrance fee, provide refuge specific annual pass, new user fee for interpretive tours, group tours and rental fees for environmental education building	Spring 1997
Buffalo Lake NWR	TX	Entrance fees	Summer 2003
Cache River NWR	AR	New quota deer hunts	Spring 1998
Cat Island NWR	LA	Deer hunts; turkey hunts quota hunt registration fee for special hunts	Summer 2002 Summer 2003
Chincoteague NWR	VA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, modify hunt fee, off-road vehicle permits	Winter 1996-1997; (off-road Spring 1998)
Cibola NWR	AZ	Waterfowl hunt	Summer 1999
Columbia NWR	WA	New honor camping fee at Soda Lake, modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	
Crab Orchard NWR	IL	New fees for all of the following: boat launch, campgrounds, fishing tournaments. Deposit concession revenue into demonstration project (deer hunt fee, fall 1996), modified entrance fee by instituting refuge annual vehicle sticker	Winter 1996-1997
Cross Creeks NWR	TN	General access hunt permit	Fall 2004
Deep Fork NWR	OK	New deer hunt fee	Fall 1996
Deer Flat NWR	ID	New fee for special youth activities building, honor boat launch/parking	Spring 1997
Desert NWR Complex	NV	Entrance fee, camping fee	Spring 2002
DeSoto NWR	IA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Dungeness NWR	WA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, new fee schedule	Winter 1996-1997
Eastern Neck NWR	MD	Modified deer hunt	Fall 1996
Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR	VA	Deer hunts and Conference Facility fees	Spring 2002
Eastern Virginia Rivers NWR Complex	VA	Deer hunts	Winter 2002
Edwin B. Forsythe NWR	NJ	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Elizabeth A. Morton NWR (Includes Long Island NWR Complex)	NY	New self-issue entrance fee	Spring 1997

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Eufaula NWR	GA	Modified hunt program by expanding waterfowl hunt program from one to three units and increase fee	Spring 1997
Felsenthal NWR	AR	Modified hunt program by increasing number of hunt days, initiate special event fee	Spring 1997
Fort Niobrara NWR	NE	New access fee for canoeing and tubing on the Niobrara river	Winter 1998
Great Bay NWR	NH	New deer hunt fee	Fall 1996
Great Dismal Swamp NWR	VA	Modified big game hunt by adding bear and archery deer hunting	Spring 1998
Great Swamp NWR	NJ	Modified big game hunt to expand hunting opportunities	Spring 1998
Hagerman NWR	TX	Archery hunt program.	Winter 2005
Hatchie NWR	TN	Deer hunt	Spring 2002
Havasu NWR	AZ	Waterfowl hunt	Fall 2003
Hobe Sound NWR	FL	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Holla Bend NWR	AR	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Horicon NWR	WI	Multi-purpose room fee, deer hunts at Horicon NWR and Fox River NWR	Summer 2002
Humboldt Bay NWR	CA	Modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	Spring 1997
Iroquois NWR	NY	Modified waterfowl and spring turkey hunts	Summer 1999 Spring 2000
J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR	FL	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Kenai NWR	AK	Modified campground fees - price reduction for walk-in sites	Spring 1999
Kilauea Point NWR	HI	Establish honor entrance fee, establish annual resident refuge specific pass	Fall 1996
Klamath Basin Complex	CA	New entrance fee, initiate photo blind fee, modified waterfowl hunt program by charging an application fee, add permit for pheasant hunt	Spring 1997
Kodiak NWR	AK	Modified cabin fees - peak pricing schedule	Spring 1999

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Laguna Atascosa NWR	TX	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, quota archery and rifle deer and hog hunt	Winter 1996-1997
Lake Ophelia NWR Complex	LA	Modified fee programs, hunting and fishing quota hunt registration fee for special hunts	Spring 1998 Summer 2003
Lake Woodruff NWR	FL	Modified deer and feral hog hunting seasons	Spring 1999
Las Vegas NWR	NM	Dove Hunt and Canada Goose Hunt	Spring 2004
Little River NWR	OK	Turkey hunt and deer hunt	Winter 2001
Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR	TX	New archery deer hunt	Spring 1999
Lower Suwanee NWR	FL	Deer hunt	Summer 2002
Mason Neck	VA	New entrance fee for Woodbridge unit	Winter 1998
Mattamuskeet NWR	NC	Modified hunt program by increasing waterfowl hunt days and increasing fees, lodge usage fees	Spring 1997 (modified Fall 2000)
McFaddin NWR	TX	Waterfowl hunt	Winter 2001
Merritt Island NWR	FL	Waterfowl hunt	Summer 2002
Mid-Columbia NWR (Includes: Umatilla NWR)	OR	Modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	Spring 1997
Midway Atoll NWR	MQ	New daily access fee	Spring 1997
Mingo NWR	MO	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 96-97
Minnesota Valley NWR	MN	New meeting room fee	Spring 1997
Mississippi WMD (Includes: Louisiana WMD & North LA Refuges)	MS	New deer and small game hunting fees	Spring 1997
Modoc NWR	CA	Modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	Spring 1997
National Bison Range	MT	New fees for 2 auto tour routes, special event fees and teacher workshops	Fall 1996
National Elk Refuge	WY	New fee for weekly elk hunt, as well as interpretive tours and special events.	Spring 1997
Nisqually NWR	WA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, new fee schedule	Winter 1996-1997
Noxubee NWR	MS	Reinstatement of waterfowl and modified deer hunts	Spring 1999

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Okefenokee NWR	GA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, modify canoe trail user fee, raise fee	Winter 96-97
Ottawa NWR	OH	New deer hunt fee	Spring 1997
Parker River NWR	MA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 96-97
Pee Dee NWR	NC	Modified hunt program by increasing number of days and expand hunt area	Spring 1997
Piedmont NWR	GA	Modified hunt program by increasing number of days	Spring 1997
Pocosin Lakes NWR	NC	Modified hunt program by increasing number of days	Spring 1997
Prime Hook NWR	DE	New fees for fishing and canoeing access. Modified deer and waterfowl hunt fee	Spring 1997
Rachel Carson NWR	ME	New hunt fees	Fall 1996
Reelfoot NWRC (Reelfoot NWR, Lower Hatchie NWR, Chickasaw NWR)	TN	Turkey hunts at all three refuges, deer hunt at Reelfoot NWR	Spring 2001
Ridgefield NWR	WA	Modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	Spring 1997
Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR	CO	Fishing fees	May 2004
Sachuest Point NWR	RI	Evening vehicle access/fishing permits	Spring 2002
Sacramento NWR	CA	New honor entrance fee program, provide refuge specific annual pass and photo blind fee	Spring 1997
Salt Plains NWR	OK	Deer hunt	Fall 2003
San Andres NWR	NM	Big game hunt	Winter 2002
San Bernard NWR	TX	Modified waterfowl hunt program	Spring 1997
Saint Catherine Creek NWR	MS	New deer hunt fee	Spring 1997
Saint Marks NWR	FL	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass, upland and big game quota hunt	Winter 1996-1997
Saint Vincent NWR	FL	Modified hunt program by increasing fee for Sambar deer hunt	Spring 1997
Santa Ana	TX	New Entrance Fee	Spring 1999
Seedskadee NWR	WY	New fees for commercial fishing outfitters and guides, joint project with BLM	Spring 1997

Station Name	State	Approved Activity	Approved
Sequoyah NWR	OK	New white-tailed deer hunt	Fall 1996
Sevilleta NWR	NM	Conference facility fee	Spring 2003
Shiawassee NWR	MI	Modified deer hunt fee, formerly managed by the State	Spring 1997
Sullys Hill National Game Preserve (Managed under Devils Lake WMD)	ND	New entrance fee and refuge specific annual pass, special event user fee	Spring 1997 (special event Spring 1998)
Supawna Meadows NWR	NJ	Modified White-tailed Deer Hunt	Summer 1999
Target Rock NWR (Long Island NWR Complex)	NY	Reactivate entrance fee program	Spring 1997
Tennessee NWR	TN	Modified hunt program by restructuring, initiated guided tour fee	Spring 1997
Tensas River NWR	LA	New ATV permits fee, hunt fees	Spring 1998
Trinity River NWR	TX	Waterfowl hunt	Winter 2002
Turnbull NWR	WA	Modified entrance fee, refuge specific annual pass	Winter 1996-1997
Union Slough NWR	IA	New deer hunt fee	Fall 1996
Upper Mississippi River Wildlife & Fish Refuge/Savanna District	IL	Modified waterfowl hunt	Spring 1997
Walkill River NWR	NJ/NY	Deer hunts, turkey hunts, waterfowl hunts	Summer 2002
Washita NWR	OK	Goose hunt and deer hunt	Spring 2001
White River NWR	AR	Modified hunt program by increasing number of days	Spring 1997
Willapa NWR	WA	New honor boat launching and vehicle parking fees near headquarters. Modified waterfowl hunt program by adding application fee and adding option of seasonal permit	Spring 1997
Yazoo NWR	MS	New entrance fee for the complex of refuges	Spring 1997

Program Performance Summary

The Recreation Fee program is not associated with one particular goal; however, funding for the program is used for visitor services and maintenance needs, including resource protection, and costs of collection on participating refuges. Therefore, the Recreation Fee program directly supports the DOI Recreation Goal to provide for a quality recreation experience, including access, and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources on DOI-managed and partnered lands and waters.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
RECREATIONAL FEE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Identification code 14-5252-0-2-303	2004 Actual	2005 Estimate	2006 Estimate
01.99 Balance, start of year	3,952	3,513	3,513
Receipts			
02.20 Receipts: Recreational Fee Demonstration Program	3,854	4,200	4,200
04.00 Total: Balances and collections	7,806	7,713	7,713
05.00 Appropriation, Fish and Wildlife Service, Recreational Fee Demonstration Program (-)	-4,293	-4,200	-4,200
07.99 Balance, end of year	3,513	3,513	3,513

Program and Financing (in thousands of dollars)

Identification code 14-5252-0-2-303	2004 Actual	2005 Estimate	2006 Estimate
Obligations by Program Activity			
00.01 Recreational Fee Demonstration Program	4,293	4,344	4,498
10.00 Total obligations	4,293	4,344	4,498
Budgetary Resources Available for Obligation			
21.40 Unobligated balance available, start of year	3,952	3,579	3,435
22.00 New Budget authority (gross)	3,854	4,200	4,200
22.10 Resources available from recoveries of prior year obligations	66	0	0
23.90 Total budgetary resources available for obligation	7,872	7,779	7,635
23.95 New obligations (-)	-4,293	-4,344	-4,498
24.40 Unobligated balance available, end of year	3,579	3,435	3,137
New Budget Authority (gross), Detail			
Permanent authority: Appropriations:			
60.20 Appropriation (special fund, indefinite)	3,854	4,200	4,200
70.00 Total new B.A. (gross)	3,854	4,200	4,200
Change in Unpaid Obligations			
Unpaid obligations, start of year:			
72.40 Obligated balance, start of year	673	811	1,024
73.10 New obligations	4,293	4,344	4,498
73.20 Total outlays, gross (-)	-4,089	-4,131	-4,200
73.45 Adjustments in unexpired accounts (-)	-66	0	0
Unpaid obligations, end of year:			
74.40 Obligated balance, end of year	811	1,024	1,322

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RECREATIONAL FEE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Outlays, (gross) Detail			
86.97 Outlays from new mandatory authority	3,083	3,360	3,360
86.98 Outlays from mandatory balances	1,006	771	840
87.00 Total outlays (gross)	4,089	4,131	4,200
Net Budget Authority and Outlays			
89.00 Budget authority	3,854	4,200	4,200
90.00 Outlays	4,089	4,131	4,200

Object classification (in thousands of dollars)

Identification code 14-5252-0-2-303	2004 Actual	2005 Estimate	2006 Estimate
Direct Obligations			
11.1 Full-time permanent	697	675	689
11.3 Other than full-time permanent	546	535	546
11.5 Other personnel compensation	170	165	168
11.8 Special personnel services payments	24		
11.9 Total personnel compensation	1,437	1,375	1,403
12.1 Civilian personnel benefits	390	375	383
21.0 Travel and transportation of persons	61	61	61
22.0 Transportation of things	39	40	41
23.1 Rent	576	588	600
23.3 Communications, utilities, and misc. charges	161	164	167
24.0 Printing and reproduction	176	180	184
25.2 Other services	310	316	315
25.3 Purchases of goods and services from Gov't Accounts	118	120	122
25.4 Operation and maintenance of facilities	153	184	221
25.6 Medical care	3	3	3
25.7 Operation and maintenance of equipment	29	30	31
25.8 Subsistence and support of persons	46	47	48
26.0 Supplies and materials	382	420	468
31.0 Equipment	145	174	178
32.0 Land and structures	266	266	272
99.95 Below reporting threshold	1	1	1

99.99 Total new obligations	4,293	4,344	4,498
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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

RECREATIONAL FEE DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

Personnel Summary

Identification code 14-5252-0-2-303	2004 Actual	2005 Estimate	2006 Estimate
Direct:			
Total compensable workyears:			
1001 Full-time equivalent employment	36	33	33
Average salary per FTE	39,917	41,667	42,515

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